

**Amendment to Uttlesford Local Plan 2021 – 2041 (Regulation 19)  
recommendation as submitted by Councillor Sell:**

**Extraordinary Council, 30 July 2024**

**Amended Recommendation (red text denotes additional wording – wording to  
be removed has been struck through):**

That Council:

- ~~I. — Agrees the Uttlesford Local Plan 2021 – 2041 (Regulation 19) document is published for eight weeks consultation 8 August to 3 October 2024.~~
- ~~II. — Agrees that thereafter, the Uttlesford Local Plan 2021 – 2041 (Regulation 19) document is submitted to government / PINS for examination.~~
  
- I. **Considers there to be excessive linear development proposed at Takeley under Regulation 19. This will create an unsustainable and incoherent community along the A120 corridor. Therefore it instructs the Strategic Director of Planning to reduce its allocation by 250 properties. This MODIFICATION should be south of Parker's Farm. This will preserve some of the rural landscape and contribute to the maintenance of the adjacent conservation area of Smiths Green. The allocation of 250 properties should be redistributed across the District.**
  
- II. Provides delegated authority for the Strategic Director of Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, to make any minor corrections prior to consultation, including for typographical and formatting purposes AND to prepare an 'Additional Modifications' Schedule for submission if required.
  
- III. Notes the technical supporting evidence in preparation for publication alongside the Draft Uttlesford Local Plan 2021 – 2041 consultation.

**Officer Advice**

The proposed amendment made by Cllr Sell and seconded by Cllr Dean is noted and would substitute for recommendations i and ii of the report to Council (paragraph 9).

The Local Plan needs to be informed by a comprehensive suite of evidence, to be consistent with national policy, guidance and legislation and to form a coherent and comprehensive strategy. This is necessary for the Plan to be capable of being found sound at Examination. Simply removing a seemingly arbitrary number of homes from a site allocation (which would then have to be re-allocated elsewhere) and then submitting the plan would very likely result in the plan being found *unsound*. This is a high risk option.

The council would need evidence-based reasons to amend the proposed allocation at Takeley. Removing 250 homes would reduce the opportunities to deliver the suite of infrastructure required to support a high quality and effective development and it would

fall below the threshold required for the allocation to be classified as a 'Garden Community' (such classification is likely to assist the Council in securing high-quality development and accessing additional support to deliver the scheme successfully). The infrastructure package proposed at the Takeley site (including open space, education, health, community facilities) are integral to effective planning and would likely become unviable with fewer homes (unless perhaps the 250 were re-allocated elsewhere within the Takeley allocation). The situation would have to be reassessed and the infrastructure reconsidered.

The strategy is based on a series of inter-connected evidence studies, including the Sustainability Appraisal, which would need to be revisited re-run and updated. This could be done, although would obviously take some time, and possibly delay the plan beyond the window for submission. It may also come back as not being possible without a complete re-write. This would require a change to the council's LDS timetable and no doubt draw attention from central government. Notwithstanding there are not thought to be appropriate planning / evidence reasons to reduce the figures at Takeley, the next question is where would the 250 then go. The plan would certainly fail if it did not provide for the district's housing need. The increase at another, or other sites, would need to be modelled for impacts. This would take time.

There is no evidence-based rationale for removing 250 homes and redistributing them. Thus, doing this now and submitting the plan would likely result in failure. Spending some months investigating and re-planning the distribution of sites in a more considered manner would delay the plan and require a revision to the LDS timetable. This would prolong the period at which the district is open to speculative development; prolong the period at which the council is subject to the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'; significantly increase the risk of government intervention; and potentially result in a less robust plan at examination.